

Remarks

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14 have been amended, and claims 3, 4 and 11 are cancelled. Claims 1, 2, 5-10 and 12-19 are presently pending in the application.

In response to Office Action's requirement for new drawings, formal drawing are attached.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-19 on prior-art. Regarding these prior-art rejections, claims 1-11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Chou (U.S. Patent No. 5,452,391), and claims 12 and 14-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chou. Applicant respectfully disagrees with these rejections.

Chou neither discloses nor suggests a fiber detector apparatus, including, among other things, a hub having a proximal end and a distal end, and having a longitudinal axis through a lumen extending through the proximal and distal ends, wherein the hub is structured to receive a fiber guide tube through the lumen; and a plurality of retractable pins that provide fiber identification information of a fiber within the fiber guide tube, the retractable pins being provided at a leading surface of the proximal end of the hub, as recited in independent, amended claim 1.

Nor does Chou disclose or suggest a fiber guide assembly, including, among other things, a fiber guide and a hub positioned around the proximal end of the fiber guide tube, wherein the hub includes a plurality of retractable pins at the proximal hub end, as recited in amended, independent claim 6.

Moreover, Chou neither discloses nor suggests a method of detecting a fiber attached to a hub, comprising, among other things, the steps of: (a) providing a hub having a plurality of retractable pins at a proximal end of the hub; (b) placing a circuit board into electrical contact

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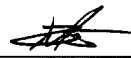
with the pins, wherein the number and position of the retractable pins contacting the circuit board determine a coding sequence indicative of the presence of a fiber; and (c) decoding the coding sequence to determine whether the fiber is attached to the hub, wherein the fiber is detected if the coding sequence reveals a predetermined electrical circuit, as recited in independent, amended claim 13.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejections on prior art be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of same is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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